IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A process for preparing a multimetal oxide material M of the stoichiometry I:

$$Mo_1V_aM^1_bM^2_cM^3_dO_n \quad (I),$$

~~where~~ wherein

M^1 is at least one of the elements selected from the group consisting of Te and Sb;

M^2 is at least one of the elements selected from the group consisting of Nb, Ti, W, Ta and Ce;

M^3 is at least one of the elements selected from the group consisting of Pb, Ni, Co, Bi, Pd, Ag, Pt, Cu, Au, Ga, Zn, Sn, In, Re, Ir, Sm, Sc, Y, Pr, Nd and Tb;

a is from 0.01 to 1,

b is from > 0 to 1,

c is from > 0 to 1,

d is from > 0 to 0.5 and

n is a number which is determined by the valency and frequency of the elements other than oxygen in (I),

whose X-ray diffraction pattern has reflections h, i and k, whose peaks are at the diffraction angles (2θ) 22.2 ± 0.5° (h), 27.3 ± 0.5° (i) and 28.2 ± 0.5° (k),

– the reflection h being the one with the strongest intensity within the X-ray diffraction pattern and having a full width at half height (FWHH) of not more than 0.5°,

– the intensity P_i of the reflection i and the intensity P_k of the reflection k satisfying the relationship $0.65 \leq R \leq 0.85$, ~~where~~ wherein R is the intensity ratio defined by the formula

$$R = P_i / (P_i + P_k)$$

and

– the FWHH of the reflection i and that of the reflection k being each ≤ 1°,

but has no reflection having the peak position $2\theta = 50.0 \pm 0.3°$;

the process comprising washing the multimetal oxide material M with a liquid selected from the group consisting of organic acids, inorganic acids, solutions of organic acids, solutions of inorganic acids and mixtures thereof,

~~in which first such a~~ wherein the multimetal oxide material M is prepared with the proviso that, in the course of the preparation of ~~this~~ the multimetal oxide material M, no precursor multimetal oxide material of ~~this~~ the multimetal oxide material M is washed with a liquid selected from the group consisting of organic acids, inorganic acids, solutions of organic acids, solutions of inorganic acids, solutions of inorganic acids and mixtures thereof ~~of the abovementioned group members, and wherein the multimetal oxide material M initially prepared in this manner is washed with a liquid from the group consisting of organic acids, inorganic acids, solutions of organic acids, solutions of inorganic acids and mixtures of the abovementioned group members~~.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): [[A]] The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the liquid with which washing is effected is an aqueous nitric acid solution.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): [[A]] The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the X–ray diffraction pattern of the multimetal oxide material M to be washed contains, in addition to the reflections h, i and k, also further reflections whose peaks are at the following diffraction angles 2θ:

$9.0 \pm$ [[±]] $0.4°$ (l),

$6.7 \pm 0.4°$ (o) and

7.9 ± 0.4° (p).

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): [[A]] The process as claimed in claim 3, wherein the X–ray diffraction pattern of the multimetal oxide material M to be washed contains, in addition to the reflections h, i, k, l, o and p, also further reflections whose peaks are at the following diffraction angles 2θ:

45.2 ± 0.4° (q),

29.2 ± 0.4° (m) and

35.4 ±0.4° (n).

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): [[A]] The process as claimed in claim 4, wherein the X–ray diffraction pattern of the multimetal oxide material M to be washed has the reflections h, k, l, m, n, o, p and q on the same intensity scale with the following intensities:

h = 100,

i = 5 to 95,

l = 1 to 30,

m = 1 to 40,

n = 1 to 40,

o = 1 to 30,

p = 1 to 30 and

q = 5 to 60.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): [[A]] The process as claimed in any of claims 1 to 5, wherein the stoichiometric coefficients a, b, c and d of the multimetal oxide material M to be washed are simultaneously in the following ranges:

a = from 0.05 to 6;

b = from 0.01 to 1;

c = from 0.01 to 1; and

d = from 0.00005 to 0.5.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): [[A]] The process as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 6~~ claim 1, wherein ~~m~~ M^1 = Te.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): [[A]] The process as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 7~~ claim 1, wherein at least 50 mol% of the total amount of M^2 is Nb.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): [[A]] The process as claimed in ~~any of claims 6 to 8~~ claim 1, wherein M^3 is at least one element from the group consisting of Ni, Co, Pd and Bi.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): [[A]] The process as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 9~~ claim 1, wherein the preparation of the multimetal oxide material M to be washed is effected by a hydrothermal method.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): A process for the heterogeneously catalyzed gas-phase partial oxidation and/or ammoxidation of a saturated and/or unsaturated hydrocarbon, wherein the catalytically active material used is the direct product of a process as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 10~~ claim 1.

SUPPORT FOR THE AMENDMENTS

Claims 1-11 are currently amended.

The claims are supported by the specification and claims, as originally filed.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite an active process step, as suggested by the Examiner, in order to clarify the process by which the multimetal oxide material M is prepared. In particular, the claim recites that the process comprises:

"washing the multimetal oxide material M with a liquid selected from the group consisting of organic acids, inorganic acids, solutions of organic acids, solutions of inorganic acids and mixtures thereof." Support for this process step can be found in the specification at page 4, lines 12-22.

The proviso in claim 1 is now set forth at the end of the claim to clarify that the multimetal oxide material M is not prepared in a manner that involves the separate washing of a "precursor material" with a liquid as specifically defined by the claim.

Claims 7-11 have been amended to remove improper multiple dependencies.

Claims 1-11 have also been amended for minor editorial purposes.

The specification has been amended to add section heading, a brief description of the drawings, and for minor editorial purposes. Support for these amendments is provided by the specification, as originally filed.

No new matter is believed to have been added by these amendments.